

May 31, 2024

Addressing of Comments Memo**Park Ave N Extension Project**

City of Renton, WA

Dear Mike Turcott and Betty Young,

The following edits were made to the UTC Crossing Permit Application for Park Ave N Extension Project per Ms. Young's comments on the application received on May 2, 2024.

“Respondent's Information – Should be BNSF”

- The Respondent on the first page has been revised to reflect BNSF Railway Co., and Section 2 - Respondent's Information has been updated accordingly. Stephen Semenick serves as the designated contact person for BNSF.

“Section 4 Current Highway Traffic Information – Estimate AADT for this new roadway. Also, the response to question 11 does not align with other sections of the petition that discuss increases to traffic as new tenants lease office space, etc. Please provide information regarding changes expected over the next 10 years (e.g., if the current AADT is 0, what does the city project in terms of traffic volumes over the new crossing?).”

- The current AADT and projected future AADT number have been confirmed with Pertteet and have been accurately reflected in this permit application. Presently, the AADT stands at 1,600 vehicles, with a projected increase to 4,300 vehicles by the year 2040.
- In response to Question 11 regarding anticipated changes in AADT over the next decade, calculations were based on the projected figure for the year 2040, with adjustments made to reflect a 2% annual increase in traffic. Consequently, a decrease of 12% (2% per year for 6 years) was applied to the 2040 projection, yielding an estimated AADT of 3,784 vehicles for the year 2034.
- The discussion also includes the anticipated increase in traffic attributed to the Southport Development in the vicinity of the project, providing a comprehensive overview of factors influencing traffic patterns and volumes.

“Section 5 Railroad Information – The information here does not match what is shown in the FRA inventory record. Please have BNSF review this section and verify information.”

- The details in this section have been updated to align with the information presented in the FRA Inventory Record. Additionally, verification of the accuracy of the information was conducted by BNSF personnel (Stephen Semenick).

“Section 10 Proposed Warning Signals or Devices – This section requires significantly more detail. Please provide information, similar to what is listed in the “Proposed Project Design” section on page 2 of the IC Review Report, detailing what will be installed/constructed.”

- This section now provides comprehensive details regarding the installation and construction plans, as requested. It includes a thorough explanation of the locations where warning devices will be situated at the crossing, along with specifications regarding the signals or devices to be added to each of these locations.
- While specific cost breakdowns for individual devices are not provided, the overall budget for the Traffic Signal System has been set at \$710,000, ensuring adequate funding for the proposed project.

The following edits were made to the UTC Crossing Permit Application for Park Ave N Extension Project per Mr. Turcott’s comments on the application received on May 28, 2024.

General Feedback

“Before filing, please proofread the petition and attachments for completeness, grammar, and spelling.”

- We have thoroughly reviewed the application and attachments for completeness, grammar, and spelling. During this process, we identified and corrected two minor grammatical errors:
 - Section 4, Question 11: The phrase "Once the new crossing is open to use" has been revised to "Once the new crossing is open for use."
 - Section 7, Question 8: The phrase "This crossing is an unnamed public street that provides access to a Lowes store" has been corrected to "Lowe’s."
- These changes have been made, and the application is now complete and error-free.

“Please only provide attachments that support the petition and identify each attachment in a cover letter. The most recent draft petition came with 60 pages of attachments.”

- We have created a cover letter identifying each attachment. The attachments now include:
 - Attachment A – Design Drawing at Crossing
 - Attachment B – SEPA Determination Letter
 - Attachment C – Design Report (Feasibility Study)
 - Attachment D – IC Review Report (RailPros Report)
- These attachments have been carefully selected to support the petition and are clearly identified in the cover letter.

“For SEPA compliance, the DNS letter is sufficient. The December 2018 Park Avenue Extension Design Report provides valuable information and should be included as an attachment.”

- We have removed all unnecessary SEPA documentation and now only included the Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) letter.
- The December 2018 Park Avenue Extension Design Report, along with all its appendices, has been attached to the petition.

“In the cover letter, please provide information about why the City proceeded with construction of the crossing prior to filing a petition and receiving approval from the UTC. In addition to the technical assistance UTC staff provided in 2021, we also noted that the Park Avenue Extension Design Report states:”

Railroad At-Grade Crossing Coordination

The Park Avenue N extension would create a new at-grade crossing with the BNSF track serving Boeing. This new crossing requires approval from the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) before it can be constructed. Their standard process for approving a project, such as this, includes having the agency requesting the new at-grade crossing complete a petition. A template for this petition is included in Appendix C. Railroad coordination is being led by Ross Widener of Widener & Associates.

“Given this information, the UTC will want an explanation from the City about the lateness of its petition.”

- As design on the project was beginning Bob Hanson called the WUTC and was advised to schedule an on-site meeting. In two previous at-grade crossings, the City had prepared the petitions, had given them to BNSF, and BNSF submitted them to the WUTC. So, when the City was advised that BNSF would take care of the WUTC petition, we believed that was an acceptable course of action and did not follow up on the plan to schedule a meeting. During design, ROW acquisition, relocation of Boeing power utilities, and crossing construction, the City continued to question the status of the WUTC petition. We were advised that it was not appropriate to make the petition until construction was complete. We apologize for not following the instruction of the WUTC.

Specific Feedback

“Section 7 – Alternatives to the Proposal

This is where the city of Renton makes its case for an at-grade vs. grade-separated crossing. State law requires this. The text in Part 2 exceeds the space provided and is cut off. If the text will not fit in the space provided, please provide the information in a clearly identified attachment.”

- We have adjusted the text box to accommodate all the explanation in Section 7 regarding alternatives to the proposal. Additionally, we have revised the content to be more concise and precise, clarifying why an over-crossing or under-crossing is not practicable.

“Section 10 – Proposed Warning Signals or Devices

This is a petition for a new highway-rail grade crossing so this section is interested in the warning signals or devices related only to the rail crossing. Please list all of the rail crossing active and passive warning devices proposed to be installed. For example, advance warning signs, pavement markings, center medians, ENS signs, crossbucks, warning lights, gates, bells, pedestrian lights/gates, pedestrian surfaces, etc. Installation of or modifications to roadway traffic signals (e.g., traffic cameras, traffic signals, Opticom, etc.) are not under consideration for approval by the UTC. Page 2 of the RailPros report submitted with the earlier draft petition had a detailed list of rail crossing signal components and other roadway changes related to the new crossing.”

- Section 10 of the proposal has been revised to focus solely on warning signals or devices pertaining to the rail crossing. We have removed any descriptions related to the installation or modifications of roadway traffic signals.
- The revised explanation aligns with the detailed list of rail crossing signal components and other roadway changes provided on Page 2 of the IC Review Report (RailPros report), ensuring clarity and relevance to the petition.
- The IC Review Report (RailPros Report) is attached to this application under the file name “Attachment D”.

“Also missing from Section 10: type of train detection circuitry and signal pre-emption calculations. The RailPros report submitted with the first draft had a concise summary of the preemption calculations and was certified by an engineer. It is important to include this as an attachment.”

- Section 10 has been updated to also include details on the type of train detection circuitry and signal pre-emption calculations. Additionally, the RailPros report, which contains a concise summary of the preemption calculations, has been attached to the application as "Attachment D."

“Section 11 – Additional Information.

This section needs more support for public safety need, such as the information included on page 58 of the petition file, “Project Need” section of December 2018 Park Avenue Extension Design Report.”

- The explanation for Section 11, pertaining to the public safety need for the proposal, has been revised to incorporate the content from the "Project Need" section of the December 2018 Park Avenue Extension Design Report.

Should you have additional questions or comment, please contact Ross Widener at (425) 332-3961 or at ross@widener-enviro.com.

Sincerely,



Ross Widener
Widener & Associates